

as an intellectual pastime. 'There is,' he says, 'very peace and false peace, and they be full diverse. Very peace is grounded in God, . . . false peace is grounded in rest with our enemies, when we assent to them without again-standing. And sword against such peace came Christ to send/' True wisdom does not always, and certainly did not then, consist in universal sympathy and tolerance. The world is moved in the first instance by those who see one side of a question only, although the services of those who see both are indispensable for effecting a settlement.

The Pope had no place in Wycliffe's free Church of all Christian men. * If thou say that Christ's Church must have a head here in earth, sooth it is, for Christ is head, that must be here with his Church unto the day of doom.¹² This complete repudiation of Papal authority was the last stage of a long process. Until the time of the schism he had done no more than state the fallibility of the Pope, and expose Papal deviations from the 'law of God.'¹³ When in 1378 his enemy and persecutor Gregory the Eleventh died, he welcomed the accession of Urban the Sixth, and hoped to see in him a reforming head of Christendom.⁴ He was soon disappointed. The anti-Pope Clement was set up at Avignon, and gods and men were edified by the spectacle of the two successors of St. Peter issuing excommunications and raising armies against each other. Then, and not till then, Wycliffe denied all Papal power over the Church.

The positive basis which Wycliffe set up, in place of absolute Church authority, was the Bible. We find exactly the same devotion to the literal text in Wycliffe and his followers, as among the later Puritans. He even declared that it was our only ground for belief in Christ.⁵ Without this positive basis, the struggle against Romanism could never have met with the partial success that eventually attended it.

As for a new scheme of Church government, Wycliffe cannot be said to have put one forward. He pleaded for greater simplicity of organisation, greater freedom of the individual, and less crushing authority. As his object was **to**

¹ *S. E. W.*, i. 321.

» *Ibid.* iii. 342.

³ *Matt.*, xv.

⁴ *De Ecc.*, 352, 358.

» *S. E. W.*, iii. 362.

I disagree

with note *a*.